Is Bigfoot Just A Big Lie?

Emily Hildick
Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science

Scientists often adhere to the idea of Occam's razor, which is a principle that states when theorizing, the number of assumptions should be minimized. In reducing the number of assumptions in a theory, its practicality is increased. Following Occam's razor does not necessarily mean that the theory is more likely to be correct, but it is simpler. A common phrase that is used to demonstrate the application of Occam's razor is, "When you hear hoof beats, think horses, not zebras." Pseudoscientists do not acknowledge the idea of Occam's razor, but instead fashion illogical and extreme conjectures ("Occam's razor", 2012).

One widely known topic of study in the field of pseudoscience is that of the alleged Bigfoot. According to the believers in this theory, there is a large, hirsute bipedal humanoid somewhere in the wild, but there has yet to be irrefutable proof. The supposed organism of immense stature is allegedly responsible for enormous footprints that have been uncovered ("Bigfoot", 2012). Pseudoscientists tend to acknowledge only their own work and often dismiss the factual science which opposes pseudoscience. One scientist who is well known among Bigfoot investigations is Grover Sanders Krantz, a significant promulgator in the field of study ("Grover Krantz", 2012). Upon analyzing Krantz as a scientist, it is fair to categorize him as a hermit scientist. Krantz works in isolation, neglects the work of recognized scientists, and fails in the publication of his studies in peer reviewed journals; these are all traits which are common among hermit scientists (Shermer, 2010).

Unlike Occam's razor, a pseudoscience is formulated with an assortment of assumptions. The primary assumption of the Bigfoot pseudoscience is that there is an organism living somewhere in the world that is uncommon enough that people are not able to find it, yet it is able to interact with nature to survive. Another supposition is that only the alleged Bigfoot could have produced the evidence that has been found. It must also be assumed that the lifespan of the organism is at least eighty years, unless there are multiple Bigfoot organisms which have reproduced. All alleged sightings of Bigfoot also must be legitimate to support the existence of this being.

If the theory of Bigfoot was analyzed utilizing the principles of Occam's razor, simpler theories would be evident. One explanation for the alleged sightings of Bigfoot is misidentification of the organism. It is very likely that Bigfoot sightings were a misinterpretation of what was actually seen. Rather than an unknown, creature, the organism could be a bear, large primate, or even a human. Another explanation for the sightings is fabrication of evidence. It is possible that the supposed tracks left by Bigfoot were concocted by humans. Fabrication of evidence could be a result of desperation in proving the theory to be true or merely a hoax.

When examined using Occam's razor, pseudoscience does not have the simplicity or logic that legitimate science has, but rather it relies on information that is assumed, not measured or calculated. These assumptions leave more room for inaccuracy and misinformation. Some

pseudosciences, such as the theory of Bigfoot, depend a great deal on reported human experiences, which does not compare to the legitimacy of other fields of science. Not all pseudosciences can be expunged because of misalignment with the principles of Occam's razor, but the basis of the field is not as strong as that of legitimate science because of the excessive number of assumptions.

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